

Lifeline

News from the Delaware County Council for Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc.

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Strategic Plan Approved; Council's Goals Set through Year 2002

Where is the Council going, and how is it going to get there? Does its name reflect its mission? How can the community be made aware of the services it offers?

These and similar questions were addressed by a Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board of Directors in June. The plan also includes a timeline that sets specific deadlines for the Council's goals through year 2002.

The committee responsible for the plan was comprised of directors, the staff, and community members. The process began with the committee identifying the Council's strengths and weaknesses as well as "external opportunities" the Council can take advantage of to operate more effectively in the community. Among the Council's strengths, according to the report, were strong leadership, a dedicated staff, and a long-standing relationship with the county's schools. The report designated lack of community awareness of the Council's work and goals as one of its primary weaknesses.

The report also directs the Council to take advantage of the increased emphasis and importance that New York State is currently placing on the prevention of alcohol

and other substance abuse. It suggests that the Council undertake an "advocacy effort" to acquire funds from the Tobacco Settlement Allocation for Delaware County.

The committee also drafted a new Mission Statement (see below). In outlining the Council's goals, the Strategic Plan cited the lack of data and needs assessment information on substance abuse in the County and recommended that the Council make the development of an "in-house, on-going needs assessment system" a priority. Other goals stated in the strategic plan included:

- Increase community awareness of the Council's mission and the services it provides.
- Cultivate existing relations and build new relationships with community organizations.
- Assess the Council's community-based programs to determine if additional programs are needed.
- Establish a professional assessment program to improve the accountability of the Council's directors, executive director, and staff.
- Expand the revenue sources of the Council to insure greater operating self-sufficiency and program expansion by pursuing grants and private sector funds and developing revenue-producing services.

Council Mission Statement

The Council is a public non-profit organization committed to the prevention of alcohol and substance abuse. We provide information, referral, and educational services to individuals and families to promote personal growth and informed choices. We envision a future in which individuals have chosen to live free from the harm of substance abuse.

A Letter from the Director

Sometimes we need to look elsewhere to see ourselves more clearly. In a recent national survey, for example, an organization, Join Together, isolated some of the characteristics of "coalitions," such as this Council, in "communities where the substance abuse situation is improving."

A growing membership is one such feature. Here our Council can report considerable progress; our membership has more than doubled in the last year although we fall short on the number of active volunteers we can mobilize. (The survey specified "more than 50," for successful organizations.) A third characteristic is "an expanding range of issues worked on." Here, too, we are moving ahead with programs, such as the intervention service described on page 3, and other initiatives.

Finally, the survey states that "having a strategy makes a difference;...organizations with measurable objectives were significantly more likely to report having a direct impact on reducing alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use." This was gratifying for me to read. The fact that we have just completed our own strategic plan indicates that we are on track with considerable promise for the future.

David Ramsey

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LifeLine

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opinion

LEAVING OUT ALCOHOL

Can you have an anti-drug campaign without targeting alcohol? That is the question raised by the recent revelation that the government's \$195 million national media campaign aimed at young people will be devotedly exclusively to combating illegal drugs.

This strategy overlooks evidence that alcohol abuse by young people is deadly in itself and often leads them to illegal drugs. Excluding alcohol, however, has the support of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, the non-profit coalition of advertising agencies working on the campaign. In a letter to the New York Times, Partnership co-chairmen, William Bennett and Mario Cuomo, argued that \$195 million was simply not enough to take on both drugs and alcohol. It would take hundred of millions more, they wrote, "to change teen-age attitudes about drinking."

We at the Council disagree. We believe alcohol is a drug—and for teenagers, an illegal drug—and that drugs and alcohol go hand in hand. Separating them in a media campaign sends the misleading message that one substance is less dangerous to youths than the other.

The Partnership's \$195 million is a pittance compared to the nearly \$3 billion the alcohol industry spends annually promoting its products, but it is real money nonetheless. Let it be spent wisely, combating the use of all illegal substances among teenagers—alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.

The Council welcomes suggestions or signed contributions for this "Opinion" column from its own members or members of the community.

Word from the Past

"Ozone and friendship will be our stimulants -- let the drugs, tobacco, and strong drink go forever. Natural joy brings no headaches or heartaches."

Elbert Hubbard (1859-1915)

Ann Morris Joins Council Board

Ann Morris, a Delhi business-woman, has joined the Council's board of directors, executive director David Ramsey recently announced. "Ann's involvement in community affairs and her belief in the effectiveness of prevention make her a valuable addition to the board," he said.

Morris, a resident of Bovina since 1972, is a principal in Morris and Ronovech, CPA's PC, an accounting firm with offices at 118 Main Street in Delhi and in Oneonta. The firm has been in existence since 1988. She is a magna cum laude graduate of SUNY Oneonta with a degree in

business economics.

Among her many community activities, Morris is treasurer of the Bovina Public Library and a consultant to and a former board member of the West Kortright Centre. She also served on the committee that developed a strategic plan for the Council.

Morris replaces Lesley Deleski, director of Catskill Area Hospice, Inc., on the Council's board of directors. In accepting Deleski's resignation, Ramsey thanked her for her "unwavering support, help, and dedication" in making the Council "the organization it was intended to be."

ISSUES • IDEAS • NOTES • NOTIONS • NEWS

MADD Youth in Washington

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is seeking high school student leaders to attend the MADD National Youth Summit to Prevent Underage Drinking 2000 in Washington, D.C., from September 29 through October 4, 2000. One high school student from each of the 435 congressional districts will be selected to attend the MADD summit on youth alcohol use.

The youth delegates will develop recommendations for preventing underage drinking and present their solutions at a Capitol Hill news conference and directly to policy makers. Most delegates will meet with their elected members of Congress.

Applicants must be committed to addressing the problem of underage drinking and be in a position to work with leaders in their communities to implement their recommendations. MADD will pay the cost of lodging, meals, and local transportation but delegates must find sponsors to cover transportation to Washington, D.C. and the \$100 registration fee.

Applications are available from the Council or on MADD's web site at www.madd.org/nys. Alamo Rent A Car and the GuideOne Foundation, an organization dedicated to preventing drinking and driving, are sponsors of the event.

Council on Line

The Age of the Internet has arrived, and your Council intends to keep up with the times. At its June meeting, the Council's board of directors approved a proposal to establish a web page for the organization. The site, which will be designed to appeal to youthful computer users, will provide engaging and informative content related to the prevention of alcohol and other substance abuse.

In addition to providing links to

sites featuring related subject matter, the site will incorporate "easily accessed content information," meaning that the user will be able to reach any other page on the site with a click of the mouse.

The site is being produced by Frederic Harris, creative director of Aleph & Co., a creative services company in Delhi. The target date to have the site up and running is September, 1999.

Look for more information on the site in your next newsletter.

See You at the

As it has in the past, the council will be represented at the Delaware County Fair in Walton this year, Monday, August 16 through Saturday, August 21. Volunteers are needed to man the booth. Duties will include distributing literature on the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, informing visitors to the booth about the Council and the work it does, and signing up new members.

Volunteers will be paired with board members or staffers at the booth. Perks include free admission to the fair, opportunity to tour the

fair when not at the booth, and all the cotton candy you can eat.

If you are willing to help out this year, please call the Council (746-8300) and let it know when you are available.

Interventions

In the world of alcohol and drug prevention and treatment, intervention is the process by which family, friends, and/or employers confront a person with the fact of his or her addiction. As a method of bringing an addict or alcoholic to recover, intervention has a history of remarkable success. Council director David Ramsey was recently trained by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence and is qualified to conduct interventions for area residents. Ramsey emphasized that interventions are a process where friends and family spend several sessions educating themselves on addiction and planning and scripting the confrontation. If the addict/alcoholic seeks treatment and begins recovery, these participants will continue to offer support. Call the Council for more details on this important new service.

Clip and Save

WHERE TO PHONE FOR HELP

Alcoholics Anonymous

Hotline: (888) 227-6237 (Provides information on AA meetings and local AA contacts.)

Treatment Services

Delaware County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Hamden
(607) 865-7656

Delaware Valley Hospital, ARU (alcohol rehabilitation unit) Walton
(607) 865-2100

The New Direction, rehab, Walton, (607) 865-4511

Binghamton General Hospital, New Horizons, rehab, (607) 762-2200

Other Agencies and Resources

Delaware County Stop DWI (607) 865-7233

Safe Against Violence (607) 746-6278

Delaware County Council for Prevention

of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Delhi (607) 746-8300

National Clearinghouse: Drug and Alcohol Information (800) 729-6686

Clip and Send

APPLICATION

Name.....

Company/Organization.....

Address.....

City.....

State..... Zip Code

Telephone.....

\$5 Individual

\$25 Church/Non-profit/Civic

\$50 Business

CONTRIBUTION \$

Memberships and donations are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to DCC and return to the

Delaware County Council for Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse
72 Main Street, Delhi, NY 13753

A Billion-Dollar Problem

According to statistics published in the Harvard Psychiatric Review:

- Nearly 14 million Americans, one in every 13 adults, met the diagnostic criteria for alcohol abuse and dependence.

- About 43% of U.S. adults have grownup with or married someone with a drinking problem.

- Only 3.4 million Americans, less than 25 % of those suffering from alcohol abuse and dependence, received treatment in 1994.

- Alcohol misuse is associated with 46% of homicides, 28% of suicides, 38% of accidental drownings, and 42% of motor vehicle accidents

- More than 50% of deaths from cancers of the mouth, esophagus, and larynx, 40% from acute pancreatitis, and 60% from chronic pancreatitis are linked to alcohol.

- The direct health-care costs of alcohol misuse totaled \$22.5 billion in 1995.

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